meeting was held with 13 prospective bidders/terminal operators Shipping Lines at Mumbai on 18.11.2003 and 19.11.2003. Cochin Port Trust re working on the re-designing of the project and re-defining the Concession Agreement.

Paradip Port Trust

613. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Paradip Port Trust would be required to handle a large volume of oil traffic when a crude pipeline would be laid between Paradip and Haldia, if so, the status of the pipeline;

(b) whether it is also a fact that once the pipeline is commissioned, it will boost the port's traffic by 10-12m. tonnes straightway; and

(c) how far it will help to create additional employment opportunities in the area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIP KUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) Paradip Port Trust would be required to handle a large volume of oil traffic when a crude pipeline is laid between Paradip and Haldia. First stage approval of the pre-project activities and preparation of Detailed Feasibility Report (DFR) for the pipeline system has already been approved by the Board of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). Pre-project activities like surveys, acquistition of Right of Users (ROU) in land, action for environment clearance etc. are in progress.

(b) The proposed pipeline would be required to transport 11.00 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA) of crude oil for the requirement of Haldia, Barauni and Bongaigaon refineries in the eastern region. As a result, port's traffic is likely to increase accordingly.

(c) Additional employment opportunities will be available temporarily for the local people during construction phase and also a few permanent vacancies during operation phase after implementation of the project.

Functioning of **NMC and NMFDC**

614. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :